

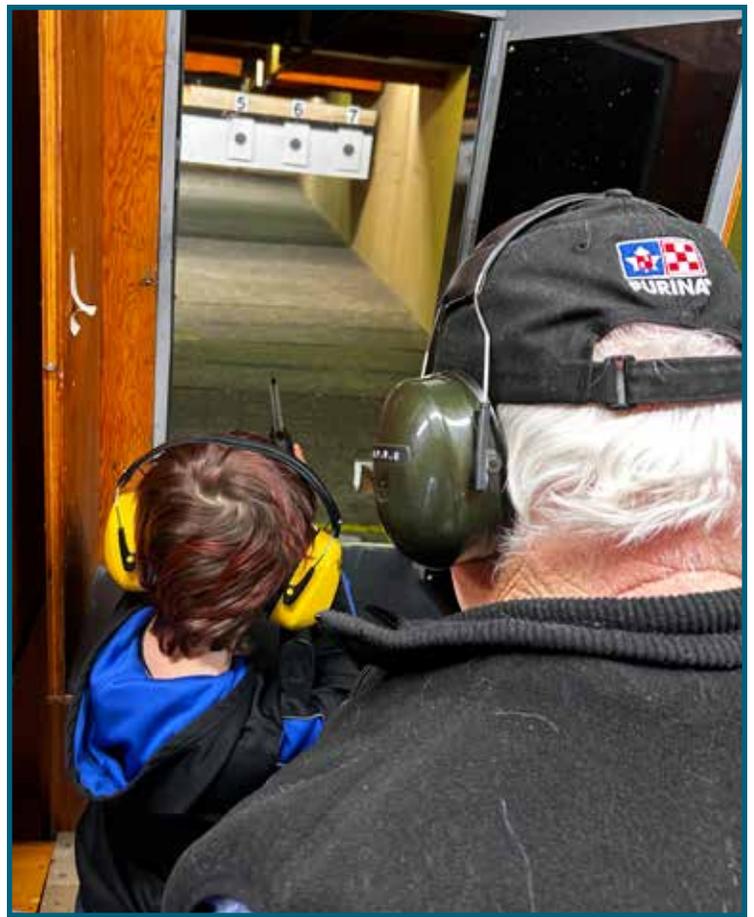
## Youth Firearms Safety Program off and running.



The long awaited start of our Youth Firearms Safety came together after week's delay due to weather. Youth Firearm Safety Program: Twenty-five youngsters turned out to try their hand at .22 rifle shooting at the BPSA, C..F.O. (Chief Firearms Officer) approved indoor range. Before shooting, all attended a firearms safety briefing where the attendees were exposed to a classroom and hands on safety and range rules session provided by Rob Quesnel, one of the course co-ordinators. They were then led in relays of seven into the 20 yard/metre range where they were paired one on one with a club safety volunteer and mentor. The BPSA

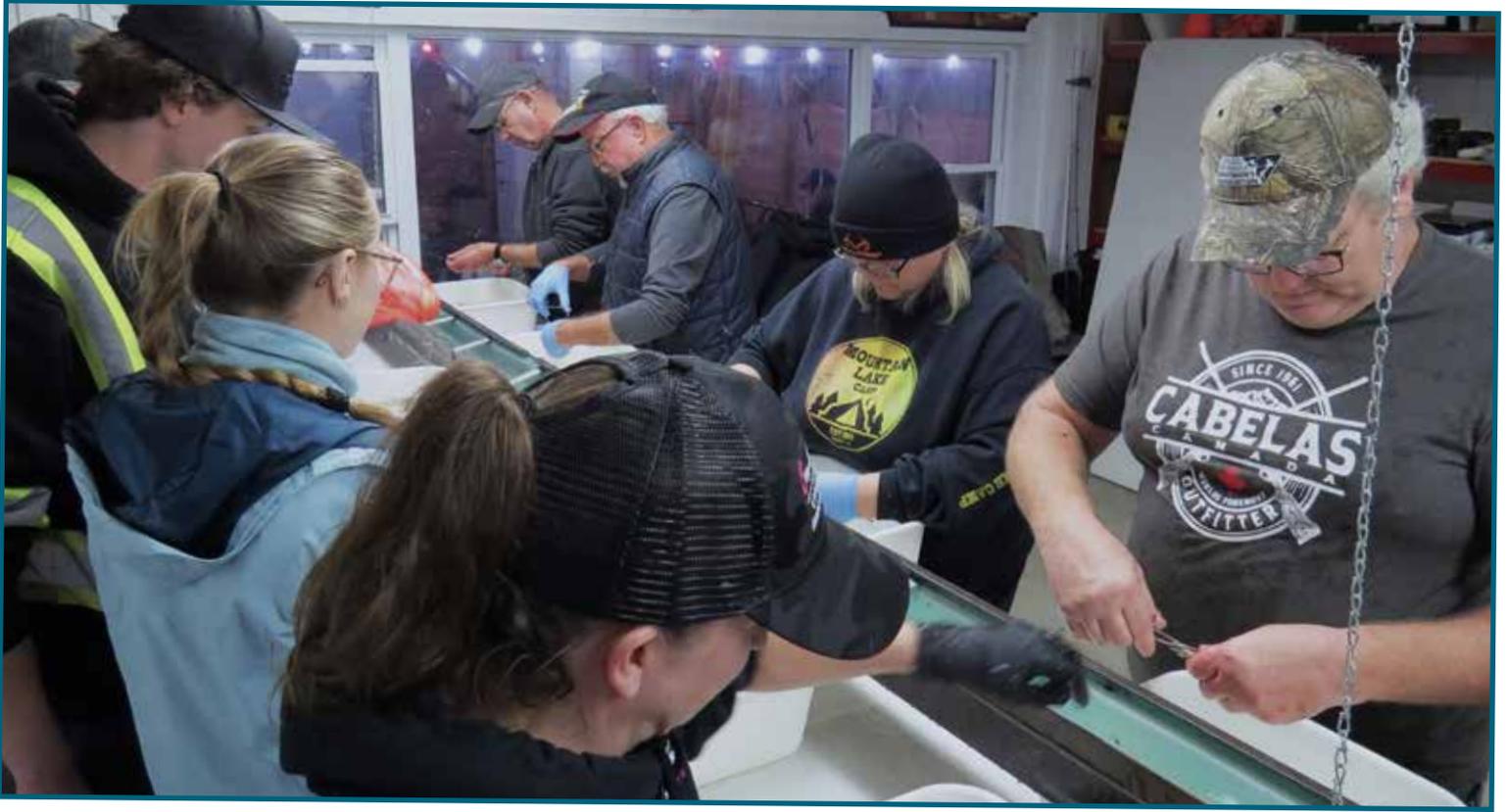
provides the youngsters with age and size appropriate single shot rifles. Eye and hearing protection equipment is provided. Their target scores and safety rules adherence are scored by club staff and at the end of the six week program shooters receive recognition for both safety and target scores. Lots of smiles were evident during the afternoon and all went home with a sense of accomplishment. Each of the six week sessions begins with additional classroom safety and handling sessions.

*by Al Hunter*





# BPSA Year End **Fin Clipping**



Just before New Year's there was a countdown at the Bruce Peninsula Sportsmen's Association (BPSA) Fish Hatchery. No it wasn't a countdown to 2024. It was all about fish, brown trout in fact. Thirty volunteers counted thousands of yearling brown trout, then clipped their adipose fins. It was an assembly line filled with love for our sports fishery. The several thousand browns, many six or seven inches long, were raised at our state of the art hatchery west of Wiarton. The fish were netted and transported to trays where they were carefully clipped.

BPSA Fisheries Chair Kevin Harders says "We clip the adipose fin which is on the back, the last one before the tail fin. This does not affect the fish and is for identification purposes."

"It is a ministry requirement," explained Alan Sutter, BPSA hatchery manager. "Any fish raised in an Ontario hatchery for more than 12 months must be fin-clipped."

This requirement is set by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Fin clipping allows researchers and sportsmen to identify whether a fish began its life in a hatchery or spent its first year in the wild. When anglers catch a fish, one of the first things we check is if it has been clipped. Then we know if it was hatchery raised. The brown trout clipped recently will be stocked in Colpoys Bay in January .

The Wiarton hatchery started as little more than an outdoor tank, fed by one stream, and partially protected by a roof.

These days BPSA operates its modern hatchery on an annual budget of approximately \$12,000. Half of this is provided by the Ontario Community Hatchery Program, which supports qualifying hatcheries across Ontario. The majority of the work performed by the club is done by members who volunteer their time. During an average year 50 BPSA volunteers donate over 1,500 hours raising and stocking: 75,000 Rainbow Trout fingerlings, 25,000 Rainbow Trout yearlings and 25,000 Brown Trout. Since the sixties, BPSA has stocked more than 4,000,000 fish to boost our sports fishery. In 2023 this 300-member conservation club stocked over 2,100 pounds of fish in Grey-Bruce waters.

"We are assisting sustainable recreational and sports fishing," said Sutter. We are proud of the work we do. "A lot of people come to this area to fish," said Sutter. "Anybody who wants a hatchery tour can contact us."

This Wiarton based conservation club is best known for fish stocking. However, we have other family-oriented programs that attract young and old. There's our "Invasive Species Awareness - Boot Scrubber Program", Stream Rehabilitation projects, BPSA youth and adult Archery, Tree Planting sessions, youth and adult Firearms Safety Training and our BPSA Handgun Club at our indoor range in the BPSA Clubhouse. Oh yes, don't forget our open houses and the annual BPSA Kids Fishing Derby.



Upcoming programs include our Ladies Firearms Safety program which began on January 28th, 2024 and runs every Sunday for 6 weeks starting at 6:30 pm. As a pilot project BPSA has dedicated the second Tuesday of the month at 6:45 pm for a rifle shoot. The first shoot is January 9th. And there's our Youth Firearms Safety Program which kicked off January 28th. It will run every Sunday for six weeks starting at 1:00 pm. These programs take place indoors at our clubhouse shooting range. BPSA recently affiliated with the 100-thousand member Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters (OFAH). OFAH is

the major Canadian lobby group representing the interests of anglers and hunters. The Federation meets regularly with governments on the many issues facing the outdoors community.

Our regular BPSA club meetings are held on the last Thursday night of the month. The next session is on February 29th at 7:30 pm at the BPSA clubhouse on North Acres Road west of Warton. Join us if you are curious about our conservation group and our aim of preserving and enhancing fish and wildlife.

*by Stu Paterson*



# Ladies Sunday **Evening Shooting Program**



The Ladies six week program began at on Sunday January 28th. Both experienced and inexperienced shooters attend a review of firearm safety and club range rules. Both classroom and hands on experience is gained before entering the range. Several of the ladies have returned from previous years to enjoy this safe and enjoyable sport and in some cases work with and mentor new shooters. There is always a trained club Range Officer and additional safety volunteers present to ensure a safe, enjoyable and welcoming environment. All equipment/training is provided. Many thanks Patricia Kreig for organizing and to the club volunteers that make these Community Programs possible!!!  
*by Al Hunter*





# Family Day Open House



**February 19th 11:00 am - 2:00 pm**

BPSA constantly celebrates the Canadian heritage pursuits of fishing and hunting. Family Day is a great way to celebrate and promote fishing and hunting, other outdoors activities and conservation, which we are all about.



Our annual Family Day open house is a valuable learning experience for young people and their parents, who often end up as members of this respected volunteer conservation organization.

Our top priority is to engage children in safe outdoors recreation and conservation.

**For Family Day 2024 BPSA will spotlight:**

- **Fish Hatchery tours - see thousands of rainbow & brown trout fingerlings.**
- **Weather permitting archery training outdoors.**
- **View our range and firearms display.**
- **Display of Clayton Urbshott wildlife wood sculptures**
- **Learn about BPSA Boot Scrubber invasive species awareness project.**
- **Cook your own hot dog and enjoy free refreshments.**

We strongly support our Family Day and Kids Fishing events. Our young people are taught the joys of outdoors recreation. At the same time they are encouraged to carry on the good conservation work started by our club's pioneers.

**Any questions email [bpsportsmen@gmail.com](mailto:bpsportsmen@gmail.com)  
BPSA is located at 611 North Acres Road, Wiarton, just off the Oliphant Road,  
2.1 km West of Hwy 6**